



Compassionate Mentoring

How to Listen Like Jesus
and love

with Gary and Cindy Blunier





Gary and Cindy Blunier

FAMILYLIFE STAFF CHAPLAINS / MENTOR TRAINERS

Quick-start Guide

for this Workbook

Whether you're learning on your own, as a couple, or with a small or large group, these activities help you process, reflect, maximize, and recall the course material as you learn.

Start on page 5. Instructions in the workbook indicate when to watch a video or work on an activity. If you're working on this material by yourself, feel free to pause the video at any time to consider some of the questions posed. If you are learning as a couple or with a group, discussion questions and activities are specifically noted.

Group facilitators: Thank you for giving of yourself to train new mentors. We have designed some easy-to-use tools just for you! Be sure to visit the **Facilitator Resources** page at:
<https://www.familylife.com/learn/facilitators-compassionate-mentoring-course/>

There you will find helpful tools like course timetables, promotional materials, how to lead engaging small groups and much more.

Encourage group sharing during the Group Discussion Questions. The questions indicated serve as a guide. Customize the questions to fit your group dynamic.

Allow participants time to reflect on the "Look Inside" questions. The suggested timetables indicate the maximum time needed. Adjust to fit your group.



Contents

Session 1	5
1.1: Why Do We Mentor?	6
1.2: What Is a Mentor?	8
1.3: What Is Mentoring?	9
Mentoring Scenario: A Life-Altering Decision (<i>optional</i>)	10
1.4: Basic Qualifications for a Biblical Mentor	10
1.5: Mentoring Myths	11
1.6: Tools vs. Rules	15
Recall & Review	16
 Session 2	 17
2.1: Introduction	17
2.2: P.L.A.C.E. Principle—Pray	17
2.3: P.L.A.C.E. Principle—Listen	22
2.4: Effective Listening	24
2.5: Coming up Next	27
Recall & Review	28
 Session 3	 29
3.1: The Mentor “Click” & Establishing Goals	29
3.2: P.L.A.C.E. Principle—Ask	32
Recall & Review	35
Mentoring Scenario: On Zoom (<i>optional</i>)	36
 Session 4	 37
4.1: P.L.A.C.E. Principle—Consider	37
4.2: P.L.A.C.E. Principle—Encourage	40
Mentoring Scenario: A Painful Path (<i>optional</i>)	44
4.3: Final Thoughts	44
4 Vulnerabilities to Which We All Must Respond	45
Recall & Review	47

Appendix: Mentoring Resource Recommendations	49
Mentoring	49
Abortion	49
Abuse within Marriage (Emotional, Spiritual, Sexual, & Physical)	50
Addiction	50
Emotional/Spiritual Health	50
Extramarital Affairs	51
Grief	52
LGBTQ+	52
Marriage	53
Pornography	54
Prodigals	54
Sexuality	55
Sexual Abuse	56
 Appendix: Online Tools	 57

Session 1

Look inside

How would you describe your level of confidence as you begin this training?

Place an X on the continuum:



Not sure I should be here.

Not sure I need this training.

Why do I want to mentor others?

What motivates, excites, or challenges me in becoming a mentor? Check all that apply.

- ☐ I want to tell people truth.
- ☐ I want to help when people need it most.
- ☐ I want to express compassion and/or nurture.
- ☐ I want to fill a need.
- ☐ I have something unique to offer/this is a unique opportunity.
- ☐ I have life experience to offer.
- ☐ I have unique or valuable perspectives.
- ☐ I would have benefited from a mentor, or I see the benefits of mentoring.
- ☐ It's an adventure; I look forward to the experiences we'll have together.

- ☐ I want to build relationships around me.
- ☐ I look forward to the challenge.
- ☐ I want to help people in their spiritual journeys.
- ☐ Other: _____

Group Discussion or Personal Reflection:

- Introduce yourself.
- If you are new to mentoring, share what caused you to take part in this training.
- If you are already mentoring, share how long you have mentored and what you hope to gain from this training.



Watch: Session 1.1

Why Do We Mentor?



Think: What are my biggest hesitations in mentoring?



Think: Consider the parable of the Good Samaritan. What are specific ways this person was hurt, robbed, or bleeding?

Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only of the gospel of God, but our lives as well.

—1 THESSALONIANS 2:8 (NIV)

If God chose only righteous people to change the world, you could count them all on one finger—Jesus! Instead, he included others in his plan—sinners, the ungodly, the imperfect. God used and uses people to change the world. People! Crooks, creeps, lovers, and liars—he uses them all!

If you ever wonder how God can use you to make a difference in your world, just look at those he has already used, and take heart. No matter who you are or what you’ve done, God can use you. Because you’re imperfect, you can speak of making mistakes. Because you’re a sinner, you can speak of forgiveness. God restores the broken and the brittle, then parades them before the world as trophies of his love and strength. And when the world sees the ungodly turn godly, they know God must love them too. God can use you, my friend!

—MAX LUCADO, “God Can Use You”¹



Think: How have you seen God use broken people—or even you, in your own brokenness?

Why do they want a mentor?

- They know you personally or have observed you.
- They may lack role models.
- They may want more out of their life, their relationships—or they may just be stuck.
- They’re experiencing challenges in this particular season of life.
- There’s a sensitive issue they may not feel comfortable telling their pastor or their closest friends.
- Their situation may feel like a crisis to them.
- They see you as safe.

¹ Lucado, Max. “God Can Use You.” Thoughts-About-God.com. 6 June 2022. Retrieved 7 June 2023.
https://thoughts-about-god.com/blog/max-lucado_god-uses-people/



Think: When you've felt emotionally safe, what has helped create that environment of safety and trust?



Think: What characteristics have shut you down or made you feel like you don't want to share?

Group Discussion:

Choose some or all of the “Think” questions above to discuss as a group.



Watch: Session 1.2

What Is a Mentor?



Mentoring is [one of the] most powerful relationships for influencing human behavior.

—SUE EDWARDS AND BARBARA NEUMANN, *Organic Mentoring: A Mentor's Guide to Relationships with Next Generation Women* ²

A mentor is a more experienced person who comes alongside you at a critical time and offers a listening ear, an encouraging voice, and a guiding hand.

—FAMILYLIFE

A mentor is someone whose hindsight can become your foresight.

—ANONYMOUS

Group Discussion or Personal Reflection:

Talk about a mentor who significantly impacted your life. Why or how did they make such a difference?



Watch: Session 1.3

What Is Mentoring?



- A relational experience where one person takes time to listen to, pray for, and encourage someone else.
- Mentoring may be for a reason, a season, or a lifetime. Just like 1 Corinthians 3:6, some of Jesus' followers plant, some water, and God makes it grow.
- Mentoring is different than counseling.
- A mentoring relationship comfortably, relevantly fits the mentee's lifestyle and particular needs.
- A mentor is an experienced guide who adds value to the life of the mentee.
- Think of mentoring as an opportunity to grow with another person.
- It's a relationship of mutual trust and confidentiality.

Group Discussion or Personal Reflection:

- In your understanding, how is counseling different from mentoring?
- In what types of situations might you recommend counseling to a mentee?
- How might a mentor come alongside a mentee who is seeing a counselor?



Watch: Mentoring Scenario *(optional)*

A Life-Altering Decision



Watch: Session 1.4

Basic Qualifications for a Biblical Mentor



A biblical mentor:

- Is a Christ-follower who has a growing relationship with Jesus Christ.
- Has the desire to care for others and help them grow and develop.
- Has the desire to allow God to use your life experiences and how He has worked in you.
- Currently models healthy personal relationships.



Think: Are my interpersonal relationships healthy? If yes, do others around me broadly affirm this?

The presence of an ongoing mentoring relationship with an older, wiser, and more mature man has a significant impact on psychological well-being. A mentor is someone deliberately chosen whom you see is modeling a life that is on the path toward sanctification. A mentor serves not only as a guide, but as a model of one who has become conformed to the image of Christ.

—WILLIAM M. STRUTHERS, *Wired for Intimacy*³

³ Struthers, William M. *Wired for Intimacy: How Pornography Hijacks the Male Brain*. Westmont, Illinois: InterVarsity Press (2009).

Group Discussion or Personal Reflection:

- Name some characteristics of a person who has healthy interpersonal relationships.
- What are some indicators of unhealthy interpersonal relationships?



Watch: Session 1.5

Mentoring Myths



A mentor is *not*...

- Necessarily old.
- Usually a peer or a parent.
- A know-it-all or the Bible-answer person.
- Perfect.
- On call for every little crisis.
- Committed long term.
- A referee.
- Necessarily teaching a curriculum.

You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise.

—DEUTERONOMY 6:5-7

Look inside

Mentoring Myths

Which are yours? Check all that apply.

- ☐ I don't have anything to offer.
- ☐ I don't know enough. I'm not prepared. I'm not going to get it right.
- ☐ I'm going to be overwhelmed by their problems.
- ☐ What if a mentee doesn't get better or move forward?
- ☐ What if a mentee makes a bad decision because of something I tell them?
- ☐ What if my mentee is lying to me and/or I don't have the full story?
- ☐ My own myth: _____
- ☐ I don't know enough of the Bible.
- ☐ What if I miss something and something bad happens?
- ☐ What if the help I give messes somebody up?
- ☐ What if I don't enjoy mentoring?
- ☐ What if I don't end up liking the person?
- ☐ What if there's conflict—or I have to confront someone?
- ☐ What if I don't have time for this?
- ☐ What if I'm not available when they need me?
- ☐ I don't have capacity to give what this person may need.
- ☐ Other: _____

Look inside

Mentoring truths

Which Scripture(s) best confront the myths I'm most prone to believe? **Circle** all that apply).

His divine power has granted to us all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us to his own glory and excellence.

— 2 PETER 1:3

Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

— PHILIPPIANS 4:6-7

For it is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

— PHILIPPIANS 2:13

And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to ... mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.

— EPHESIANS 4:11-14

Then hear from heaven Your dwelling place and forgive and render to each whose heart you know, according to all his ways, for you, you only, know the hearts of the children of mankind...

— 2 CHRONICLES 6:30

If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.

— JAMES 1:5

For the Lord sees not as man sees: man looks on the outward appearance, but the Lord looks on the heart.

—1 SAMUEL 16:7

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.

—JOHN 14:26

“I know that you can do all things, and that no purpose of yours can be thwarted.”

—JOB 42:2

Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.

—PHILIPPIANS 2:4

Just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.

—1 THESSALONIANS 2:4

I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

—ROMANS 12:1

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

—EPHESIANS 2:10

Fear not, for I am with you;

be not dismayed, for I am your God;

I will strengthen you, I will help you,

I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

—ISAIAH 41:10



Watch: Session 1.6

Tools vs. Rules



Think: When I'm honest, is this season in my life one where I need to *have* a mentor more than *be* a mentor?



Take Away: Mentoring is about tools, not rules.

My takeaway(s):

Session 1: Recall & Review

Instructions for Recall and Review sections

After a time of self-reflection, share your answers as you feel comfortable. Remember, vulnerability begets vulnerability.

Potential vulnerabilities

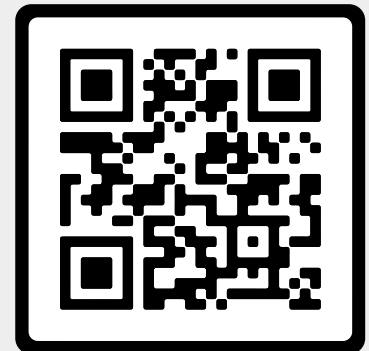
- Where do I fear failure the most in mentoring? Why is this particular failure intimidating? In what areas or circumstances do I feel I will need to depend on God the most?
- In what ways am I prone to overestimate my abilities in mentoring?
- What obstacles may keep me from becoming a mentor?
- What is God's perspective on my fears and obstacles? (Use Scripture if possible.)



Great mentors keep learning.

Don't miss the additional podcasts, downloads, and other practical, free mentoring tools for this course!

Use this QR code to access our **Compassionate Mentoring** community and supplemental resources at familylife.com/mentors-course.



Session 2



Watch: Session 2.1

Introduction



Look inside

What portion of the P.L.A.C.E. Principle do I expect will be hardest for me? Why do I suspect these particular areas are hard?

- Praying
- Listening
- Asking good questions
- Considering Scripture and a different perspective
- Encouraging



Watch: Session 2.2

P.L.A.C.E. Principle: Pray



P.L.A.C.E. Principle: Pray

Praying sets the context for you to work with the Holy Spirit.

- Real heart change comes only from God.
- Pray out loud with and for your mentee.

In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us through wordless groans.

—ROMANS 8:26 (NIV)

Thoughts about praying for your mentee

- Your mentee will likely appreciate it and gain strength and hope from prayer.
- Pray Scripture.
- Use prayer to transition or close your conversation.

Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.

—JAMES 5:16



Take Away: Prayer creates an environment for change.

My takeaway(s):

Look inside

If praying out loud is uncomfortable, what causes you the most concern? **Circle** all that apply.

- I might not say things right.
- I might make the other person feel awkward.
- I might feel awkward and stumble all over myself and/or make that time feel weird.
- I haven't prayed out loud very often.
- They might think I am too spiritual or unrelatable.
- For me, prayer is private.
- Other: _____

Examine these Scriptures that you can pray with your mentee.

- **Circle** those that resonate.
- On your own, you might **practice** praying them out loud for another person.
- Put a **checkmark** (✓) by those you might want to memorize.
- Consider **memorizing** the reference for a few of your favorite verses so you can look them up in your Bible when praying with your mentee.

☐ *If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him.*

—JAMES 1:5

☐ *Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us...*

—EPHESIANS 3:20

- ☐ *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.*

—GALATIANS 5:22-23

- ☐ *Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*

Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.

—PHILIPPIANS 4:4-8

- ☐ *Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness. For we do not know what to pray for as we ought, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. And he who searches hearts knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God.*

—ROMANS 8:26-27

- ☐ *Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

—HEBREWS 4:16

- ☐ *And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

—EPHESIANS 6:18 (NIV)

- ☐ *Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working.*

—JAMES 5:16

- ☐ *Call to me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.*

—JEREMIAH 33:3

If praying out loud is uncomfortable, practicing in private can help you become used to hearing yourself. Start by writing the prayer, then practice reading it aloud.

For instance, for Romans 8:26-27 you might pray, “Lord, we do not know how to pray for this circumstance. But Your Word tells us that the Holy Spirit intercedes for us when we don’t know how to pray. Thank You Lord for helping us as we pray to You.”

You don’t have to memorize the Scripture. Open the Bible while you’re with your mentee, and pray the Scripture as you are reading it for reference.

It’s a powerful way to pray.

Group Discussion or Personal Reflection:

Divide into groups of two or three. Each person will pick a Scripture from the list - or another favorite verse—and pray that Scripture aloud with their partner for a situation in that partner’s life.

Group facilitator, pray a Scripture over the entire group to wrap up.



Watch: Session 2.3

P.L.A.C.E. Principle: Listen



P.L.A.C.E. Principle : Listen

- Effective mentoring involves good listening.

Most people do not listen with the intent to understand; they listen with the intent to reply.

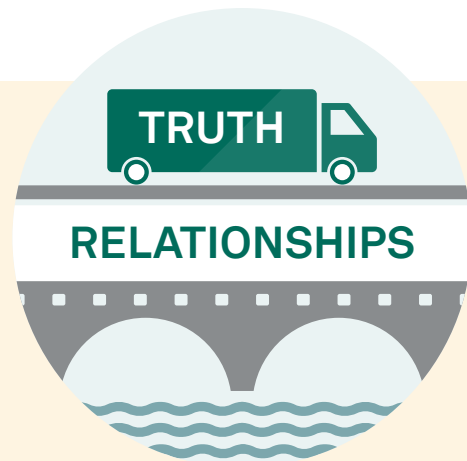
—STEPHEN R. COVEY, *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People* ⁴

A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in expressing his opinion.

—PROVERBS 18:2

- Good listening develops trust. People long to be heard and understood.

Build relationships strong enough to hold ***truth***.



Look inside

- When do I remember dispensing truth to someone before building a “relationship bridge?” How did it go? How might having a stronger relationship with that person improve the discussion of truth?
- List ideas you can see yourself using to begin building a “relationship bridge” with someone. This can be as simple as inviting them to a cup of coffee, or more challenging, like talking less.

- List specific people you want or need to build a “relationship bridge” with.

Group Discussion:

After a time of self-reflection on the above questions, have a few participants share their responses.



Watch: Session 2.4

Effective Listening



How can I show empathy?

- Reflect the mentee's feelings and thoughts.
- Match their level of sadness or anger.
- Repeat back what was said.
- Use their terminology to describe their situation (as long as that terminology is appropriate).
- Refer back to things they've said.
- Use inviting body language (leaning forward with arms uncrossed, nodding occasionally, making eye contact, making affirming or compassionate sounds).
- Speak at their eye level, rather than physically speaking down to them (e.g., they're sitting and you're standing).
- Use a low, warm tone of voice.

Answering before listening is both stupid and rude.

—PROVERBS 18:13 MSG

Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD... Let your ears be attentive to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

—PSALM 130:1-2

Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep.

—ROMANS 12:15



Think: What lies beneath this presenting issue? How can I help this person explore their soul?

Six common barriers to effective listening

By Drs. Les and Leslie Parrott ⁵


- **Distractions:** Cellphone, TV, texting, social media, and all the rest.
- **Defensiveness:** Perceiving a comment as a criticism.
- **Closed-mindedness:** Not being open to others' opinions and ideas.
- **Projection:** Attributing your own thoughts and feelings to another person. (Believing he's the one who's angry, when you're the one hot under the collar).
- **Pride:** Thinking you have little to learn from the other person; assuming you know what the other person thinks, wants, or will say.
- **Being judgmental:** Behavior often makes sense in context; until you understand the context, be careful to not judge the behavior.



Take Away: Slow down and build relationships strong enough to hold truth.

⁵ Parrot, Drs. Les and Leslie. Online Marriage Mentor Certification Journal. *Marriage Mentoring Initiative*.
<https://media1.razorplanet.com/share/510079-4661/siteDocs/Online%20Marriage%20Mentor%20Certification%20Journal%20Handnotes%20edition%20v2.pdf> Retrieved March 8, 2023.

My takeaway(s):



Look inside

Circle the barriers on the previous page which tempt you most often. How might you overcome these barriers?

Group discussion:

Have participants share what they circled and how they have or will seek to overcome these barriers.



Watch: Session 2.5

Coming Up Next



Look inside

As a general guideline, consider talking 25% of the time while the mentee talks 75% of the time.

What makes you cringe about this guideline? Check all that apply. (If you're in a group, share your answer.)

It's challenging to listen this much when the person is...

- ☐ Boring.
- ☐ Taking forever to get to the point.
- ☐ Narrow-minded or forceful.
- ☐ Bringing up uncomfortable subjects.
- ☐ Needing to be confronted.
- ☐ Illogical, unintelligent, or uninformed.
- ☐ Too emotional.
- ☐ Complaining.
- ☐ Not talking at all, and I feel like I have to fill the silence.
- ☐ Other: _____

It's challenging to listen this much when I am...

- ☐ Having to focus on what they're saying rather than how to respond.
- ☐ Distracted.
- ☐ Angry.
- ☐ Exhausted.

- ☐ Feeling critical.
- ☐ Feeling disrespected.
- ☐ Feeling like I know what they should do, how they should respond.
- ☐ Frustrated with their life choices.
- ☐ Believing something very different from them.
- ☐ Other: _____

Session 2: Recall & Review

Instructions for Recall and Review sections:

After a time of self-reflection, share your answers as you feel comfortable. Remember, vulnerability begets vulnerability.

Looking at Adam and Eve, who were “naked and unashamed” in the very first human relationship, we can see God has hardwired us for vulnerability—as an opportunity for connection.⁶

But our vulnerability can also bring shame and rejection.

- When have people’s lack of listening and poor responses to you caused you pain or shame?
- In contrast, how have you felt *seen, valued, and heard* when telling your story? Think as specifically as possible about what contributed to this feeling of emotional safety.
- Listening shows that you care. Rather than you responding with advice, your mentee may, in times of big emotion, just want you to take time to sit with them as a friend.



Session 3



Watch: Session 3.1

The Mentor “Click” & Establishing Goals



What is the mentor “click”?

- **You experience a chemistry together.** You usually can’t pick a best friend or romantic attraction for someone, and you can’t usually create chemistry with a mentee, either. “Chemistry” refers to an intangible “spark” that leads to connection.



Think: Who has God connected me with? With what potential mentees do I naturally sense chemistry?

- **Your relationship is mentee driven.** Your interactions are propelled by the needs, struggles, and curiosity of the mentee.
- **Mutual learning experience.** We are all part of the body of Christ and can learn from each other. Mentoring can be a mutually rewarding experience.



Think: How can I get intentional about learning from my mentee?

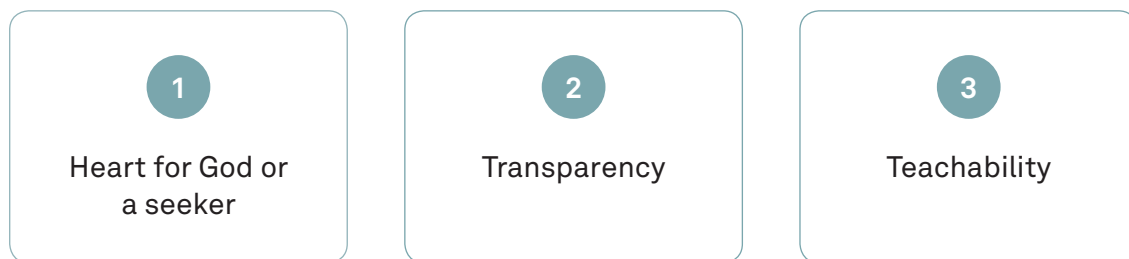
We all long to love and be loved—to understand and be understood.

Establishing goals with the mentee

How do I get started?

- Remember that you can keep it informal.
- Start in a neutral place. Not your home if you don't know them; a church setting might be too formal or not private. A coffee shop may be a good location if you don't anticipate deep emotion at this first meeting.
- Ask what your mentee wants from this relationship.
- Set a preliminary "probation" period for both of your sakes: "Let's try this out for ____ months."
- Determine how much time to meet each mentoring session and how often.
- Keep your meetings same-sex.

3 characteristics of a successful mentoring relationship



Getting Started

- Pray. Ask God how He wants to use your life experience.
- Who has God put in your path? (Think of your church, small group, engaged or newlywed couples, referrals, people who ask you, people God prompts you to ask, etc.)

- **Schedule an initial meeting** to explore objectives, frequency, and duration. Keep in mind it is important for your mentee to feel comfortable, so choose the time and the venue with that as a priority. Will they feel more comfortable meeting at a coffee shop or in your home?
- **Objectives.** Do they want to meet to talk about a specific issue or problem they are facing or just have dinner and enjoy conversation? Will the mentoring have a more formal or purposeful look and feel, or will it be more occasional and casual?
- **Frequency.** When will you meet? Occasionally? Every week? Every other week, with a “homework” assignment or date night planned for the off week? Or maybe the wives and husbands meet separately if you’re a married couple mentoring another married couple? Or maybe you meet just for a “tuneup” once or twice a year to see how they are doing.
- **Duration.** The goal could be to mentor them for six months initially. At that point, reassess to determine if their goals are being met. Do they want to continue to meet or change the frequency of the meetings, etc.? Everyone is free to back out of the arrangement or simply “graduate” if you feel the objectives have been met. If, at the beginning, you set this expectation to reassess at a certain point, it’s easier to address any problems and proceed accordingly.



Is it okay for me to initiate?

Yes. But even if you as a mentor have capacity and desire to mentor, and would like to initiate with a mentee, the mentee may not be ready.

Group Discussion or Personal Reflection:

- Brainstorm environments where you might know potential mentees. Mentors in your group with experience might share how and where they encountered mentees.
- Examine the “3 characteristics of a successful mentoring relationship.” What does it look like for a mentee to possess each of these characteristics? What might indicate that someone isn’t displaying these qualities?



Watch: Session 3.2

P.L.A.C.E. Principle: Ask



P.L.A.C.E. Principle: Ask good questions

Asking good questions is *more* important than having all the answers.

- **Understand the context:** Often behavior makes sense in context. Until you understand the context, be careful not to judge the behavior.
- **Acknowledge their emotions.** How are they interacting deep down with regard to the circumstances they're relaying to you? Often, your questions can help the person figure out what they are feeling and to realize that their feelings are normal. Sometimes with a great listener, the speaker goes away understanding themselves better.
- **Good questions invite participation.**
- **Check your tone of voice and slow your pace;** go "low and slow."

The purpose in a man's heart is like deep water, but a man of understanding will draw it out.

—PROVERBS 20:5

What is a good question?

- Think, "Is this question more likely to foster conversation or hinder it?"



Foster conversation by asking who, what, when, where, and how. Avoid using why; it can come across as judgmental.

- Silence can be good. Silence can serve as the next question.
- Good questions are open-ended, without a yes or no answer.

Despite Jesus' knowledge of those He met, He often asked more questions of them than He made statements to them. He helped people to know themselves and know Him.⁷

⁷ Emmanuel Fellowship Church. "135 Questions Jesus Asked." Monday Morning Review. May 14, 2010.
<https://mondaymorningreview.wordpress.com/2010/05/14/137questionsjesusasked/>

Examples of well-worded mentoring questions

GOOD	BETTER
Do you fight a lot with your spouse?	What do you and your spouse tend to have conflict about?
Have you been reading your Bible every day?	What has God been teaching you recently?
Do you have an accountability partner?	Who in your life has permission to ask the tough questions?
Are you praying with your spouse?	What ideas do you have that could help you and your wife begin praying together more often?
Do you get along with your in-laws?	How is your family different from your spouse's and how has that affected your marriage?
Are you feeling stressed?	If you made a list of the things causing you stress right now, what would the top three be?

Your goal is to understand the person's heart, not just gather information.



Take Away: Asking good questions is more important than having all the answers.

23 Questions To Get To What *Matters*

Take your discussions to the next level.

<p>1</p> <p>What was that like for you?</p>	<p>2</p> <p>How has that affected/changed/ been affecting you?</p>	<p>3</p>  <p>What's been on your mind lately?</p>	<p>4</p> <p>What do you wish people could understand about that experience for you?</p>
<p>5</p> <p>What's God been doing in you lately?</p> 	<p>6</p> <p>How can I be praying for you in the next few days?</p>	<p>7</p> <p>What are you praying for right now?</p>	<p>8</p> <p>[For someone going through a tough season] What's the one question you wish you could answer right now?</p>
<p>9</p> <p>What do you want most for your relationship with [name] right now?</p>	<p>10</p>  <p>Where do you find refuge or comfort when things aren't going right with [name]?</p>	<p>11</p> <p>How has this changed you?</p>	
<p>12</p>  <p>What could you use most from me right now? How can I be in your corner?</p>	<p>13</p> <p>What do you wish people could understand?</p>	<p>14</p> <p>What do you most want or wish for out of all this?</p>	<p>15</p> <p>How do you think God is responding to you in all this?</p>
<p>16</p> <p>What do you truly want? If that doesn't happen, how do you hope to deal?</p>	<p>17</p> <p>I'm hearing that ____ is really important to you. Do you think it's become too important?</p> 	<p>18</p> <p>What are you most afraid of right now?</p>	
<p>19</p> <p>What are you trusting right now?</p>	<p>20</p> <p>What do you want most to protect, or just avoid?</p>	<p>21</p> <p>What do you wish you could say?</p>	<p>22</p> <p>What do you feel like doing?</p>
			<p>23</p> <p>Right now, what instinctively feels right?</p>

My takeaway(s):

Session 3: Recall & Review

Instructions for Recall and Review sections:

After a time of self-reflection, share your answers as you feel comfortable.
Remember, vulnerability begets vulnerability.

What if you aren't "clicking" with your mentee? Discuss various ways you might handle this situation.

How might you rephrase these questions to deepen the conversation?

- Gratitude is important in a relationship, don't you agree?
- What are the four things you should have done differently in your marriage this week?
- Why do you always leave in the middle of an argument?
- Are you aware that leaving at that time communicates rejection to your spouse?





Watch: Mentoring Scenario *(optional)*

On Zoom



Great mentors keep learning.

Don't miss the additional podcasts, downloads, and other practical, free mentoring tools for this course!

Use this QR code to access our **Compassionate Mentoring** community and supplemental resources at familylife.com/mentors-course.



Session 4



Watch: Session 4.1

P.L.A.C.E. Principle: Consider



P.L.A.C.E. Principle: Consider

1. Good mentors think carefully and biblically. Time is a critical part of the process. Neither you nor the mentee can be rushed.
2. Take time to think and pray about what your mentee is sharing, and what biblical truth applies to the entire context of their situation—what’s appropriate for this occasion (Ephesians 4:29). Consider asking a mentee who claims to follow Jesus to reflect on their situation in the mirror of God’s Word.
3. Appropriately introduce Scripture and other resources for both you and the mentee to discuss. Talk about next steps or other options they may want to consider.
 - Offer a different point of view.
 - What does God’s Word say?
 - Recommend trustworthy resources. (See the appendix for a handful of the Bluniers’ recommendations.)
 - With the mentee’s permission, provide accountability.
 - Is professional counseling an option?

Come now, let us reason together, says the LORD.

—ISAIAH 1:18



Take Away: Be patient, then humbly share biblical truth.

My takeaway(s):

Look inside

Why might someone not respond to me or to what I recommend?

- They may not be ready or invested. Join God where He's already working—while still investing in people who seem impossible.
- People's hearts might be stubborn.
- Your mentor "click" may not be there (i.e., you may lack "chemistry" together in their mind).
- Reexamine your environment of emotional safety, remembering everyone thinks they're emotionally safe.
- Don't give up right away. Try three different times to connect with them, using various methods.
- Remember: You can't care more than they do.
- Allow the Holy Spirit to lead you in the way you reach out. There's no formula for how often you should reach out or be rejected, etc.
- After deep conversation, your mentee's confession, or a revelation of theirs that leads to silence, realize the person may feel exposed or vulnerable. Reassure them you care.

- Remember triggers recalling negative or traumatic experiences are multifaceted, including noises, smells, sights, and mental images recalling trauma, which your mentee may or may not be aware of. You may not be able to figure out why your conversation didn't work, but don't take it personally. Give someone the benefit of the doubt.

When you're stuck and looking for next steps with a mentee, which of these options are you most likely to pursue first? Check one, and if you're in a group, share your answer.

- ☐ Search the internet.
- ☐ Consult an expert (pastor, counselor, person with past experience).
- ☐ Read a book or an article.
- ☐ Pray.
- ☐ Listen to a podcast.
- ☐ Discuss with my spouse or a close friend, being mindful of confidentiality.
- ☐ Other: _____



Watch: Session 4.2

P.L.A.C.E. Principle: Encourage



P.L.A.C.E. Principle: Encourage

Encouragement is one of the most powerful tools to shape the life of another person.

If anyone loudly blesses their neighbor early in the morning, it will be taken as a curse.

—PROVERBS 27:14 (NIV)

A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in a setting of silver.

—PROVERBS 25:11

The ABCs of Encouragement:

A

Acknowledge the other person's circumstances.

B

Believe in them.

C

Cheer them on.

Therefore encourage one another and build one another up, just as you are doing.

—1 THESSALONIANS 5:11

How do you know if someone needs encouragement? Just check to see if they're breathing.

—TRUETT CATHY, CHICK-FIL A

Often, wise mentoring involves helping your mentee view the glass half full versus half empty.

The roles of an encourager



Because we loved you so much, we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well.

—1 THESSALONIANS 2:8 NIV



Take Away: Highlight their progress and celebrate their successes.

My takeaway(s):

A large, empty white rectangular box with rounded corners, intended for the user to write their personal takeaway(s) from the session.

Look inside

Which methods of encouragement do you find easier? **Circle** those.

Which are harder for you? Place a check next to those.

If you're in a group, share your selections and why you've made them.

- ☐ High five, pat on the back, or hug.
- ☐ Small but meaningful gift to mark a milestone or show you were thinking of someone.
- ☐ Note, email, or text.
- ☐ Phone call.
- ☐ Invitation to coffee, dinner, etc.
- ☐ Act of service (a household project, caring for a child, or another task).
- ☐ Attendance at a meaningful event.
- ☐ Other: _____

Group Discussion or Personal Reflection:

In groups of 3-4, read through the practice case below. Discuss how you can utilize the P.L.A.C.E. principles in this mentoring situation. Refer to page 34, what are some good questions you might ask?

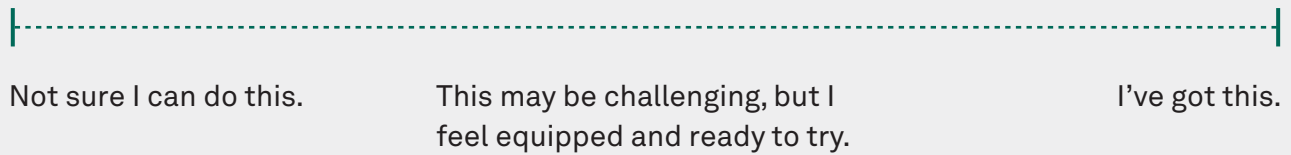
In conversation with you, a neighbor shares, "My son Jeremy is almost 17 years old. He's getting into smoking and drugs again and is failing in school. He just told me he doesn't believe in God anymore and doesn't want to go to church with us. He's a good kid—just all messed up. He thinks he's punishing his dad and me for the divorce. Jeremy was 4 when his dad left us."

Look inside

Final Thoughts

How would you describe your level of confidence as you finish this training?

Place an X on the continuum:



Watch: Mentoring Scenario *(optional)*

A Painful Path



Watch: Session 4.3

Final Thoughts



I believe the greatest gifts we can give to another person are our presence and our willingness to join with them in creating a safe space for exploration and discovery.

—GEORGE FALLER & DR. HEATHER WRIGHT, *Sacred Stress*⁸

Remember:

- Give yourself grace. Allow yourself the freedom to fail.
- Many mentors are helpers and must resist the temptation to become overly involved. Beware of taking unhealthy control of responsibility which God has given your mentee.
- Be concerned, but not responsible, for mentees' circumstances, choices, or outcomes.
- You can't be expected to fix the situation or provide all the answers. That's God's job.
- Be willing to let your mentoring not be perfect, trusting God can use even your mistakes. Pray that God will help the mentee to hear and heed what was said in the Holy Spirit's power.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and lowly in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

—MATTHEW 11:29-30



Watch:

4 Vulnerabilities to Which We All Must Respond



4 vulnerabilities to which we all must respond

by David Robbins, President & CEO of FamilyLife

- I am not sufficiently good, wise, or gifted enough to make things work.
- My failures will harm others, the process, and myself—no matter how hard I try to avoid failure.
- The greatest harm I can do is to try and limit the damage I cause by not participating, by quitting, or by pushing for control.
- Calling out for help from God or others is the deepest confession of humility.

It is God who works in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.

—PHILIPPIANS 2:13

Write down three concepts from this training which you found the most helpful. If you're in a group, share your thoughts.

1.

2.

3.

Look inside

Circle which of the four vulnerabilities on page 45 resonates most with you. Why?

Review your responses to the “Potential Vulnerabilities” questions at the end of Session One (See page 16).

- What encouragement and truth can you use to respond to your own vulnerabilities?
- What have you learned in this training that might address some of your fears in mentoring?
- Author Jan Johnson points out that if we know how to worry, we know how to meditate.⁹ When you think about God and His purposes, what truths are larger and more important than what you’re afraid of? How could you “meditate” on these more than your fear?

Session 4: Recall & Review

Instructions for Recall and Review sections:

After a time of self-reflection, share your answers as you feel comfortable. Remember, vulnerability begets vulnerability.

- Read through the list on page 38 of reasons why someone might not respond. Does anyone in the group have experience with a mentee not responding well? If so, what might have been the cause? Discuss ways to proceed when a mentee is unresponsive.
- Pick a common sin issue that comes up in mentoring and discuss how you might seek to discover what weaknesses, unmet desires, falsehoods, etc. could lie beneath that presenting issue.
- What are thoughtful, biblical ways to address sin in which your mentee would be the most responsive and sense your unconditional care for them, as well as God’s?



⁹ Johnson, Jan. *When the Soul Listens: Finding Rest and Direction in Contemplative Prayer*. Colorado Springs, Colorado: Navpress (2017).

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How to Mentor: A You-Can-Do-This Guide

Download your free eBook from FamilyLife at

<https://www.familylife.com/how-to-mentor/>

Mentoring Resource Recommendations

A note from Gary and Cindy Blunier, the hosts of this course: We recommend these resources as mentors—not as representatives of FamilyLife. In these descriptions, we write to you from our own perspective (we = Gary and Cindy).

Some of these resources are authored by Christians and some are not. With Saint Augustine, we believe “all truth is God’s truth.” But neither we nor FamilyLife endorse all material, sources, links, etc. or even authors in every resource. (If we waited for every author to agree with us or reach perfection, we might be waiting awhile! Especially since we’re not perfect ourselves.)

As with any resource that isn’t the Bible, employ discernment in what you read and pass along to mentees, particularly since this list may grow dated in our rapidly paced culture.

MENTORING

***Organic Mentoring: A Mentor’s Guide to Relationships with Next Generation Women*, by Sue Edwards & Barbara Neumann**

Some beloved mentoring methods for mentoring aren’t effective for a new generation. This book walks through the values, preferences, ideas, and problems shaping the next generation, and how they’ll impact your mentoring. Personally, we refer to this as the source of our concept for mentoring.

ABORTION

***Her Choice to Heal: Finding Spiritual and Emotional Peace After Abortion*, by Sydna Masse & Joan Phillips**

Because nearly a quarter of American women have experienced abortion,¹ it’s likely you could encounter their pain and possibly post-abortion syndrome (PAS). This is the resource I (Cindy) have used to help women find a way to God’s healing.

¹ <https://www.gutmacher.org/news-release/2017/abortion-common-experience-us-women-despite-dramatic-declines-rates>

ABUSE WITHIN MARRIAGE (EMOTIONAL, SPIRITUAL, SEXUAL, & PHYSICAL)

***Boundaries in Marriage: Understanding the Choices that Make or Break Loving Relationships*, by Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend**

In mentoring, we have found many couples don't understand healthy boundaries. This book helps mentees understand how to practice freedom and responsibility within the commitment of marriage.

***The Emotionally Destructive Marriage: How to Find Your Voice and Reclaim Your Hope*, by Leslie Vernick**

Emotional and spiritual abuse is a hot topic in the Christian community today. And it's often hard to know when behavior is damaging. The quiz offered in this book helps a mentee self-identify whether their marriage is difficult or damaging through self-assessment.

ADDICTION

***Grace-Based Recovery: A Safe Place to Heal and Grow*, by Jonathan Daugherty**

This small-group study is designed to help those suffering from addiction, as well as help those close to them understand why God's grace is the only road to true freedom.

***No Stones: Women Redeemed from Sexual Addiction*, by Marnie Ferree**

Ferree offers her own story of God's power but also distills her clinical expertise on female sexual addiction in ways doable and tender, providing a much-needed resource for women struggling with any degree of relational or sexual addiction.

EMOTIONAL/SPIRITUAL HEALTH

***Changes that Heal*, by Dr. Henry Cloud**

Changes that Heal offers a "down-to-earth plan to help us recover from the wounds of the past and grow more and more into the image of God."

Emotionally Healthy Spirituality, by Peter Scazzero

Scazzero proposes the concept that we must treat our emotions as a discipleship issue; that “it’s impossible to be spiritually mature, while remaining emotionally immature.” This book’s a game changer for those unfamiliar with emotional intelligence and it’s connection to spiritual growth.

The Language of Letting Go: Daily Meditations for Codependents, by Melody Beattie

These secular, daily meditations offer growth and renewal and prevent us from feeling overly responsible for what we can’t control in others’ lives.

Necessary Endings: The Employees, Businesses, and Relationships That All of Us Have to Give Up in Order to Move Forward, by Dr. Henry Cloud

At times, ending relationships allows us to correct what’s bad and the broken in our lives. But handling endings badly—or avoiding them—can lead to cycles of misery and lost opportunities. Personally, we refer to this book to help someone identify when and how to end a dysfunctional relationship.

When to Walk Away: Finding Freedom from Toxic People, by Gary Thomas

Similarly, this resource helps both mentors and mentees understand when a difficult relationship becomes harmful, unloving, and unwise to continue.

EXTRAMARITAL AFFAIRS

Anatomy of an Affair: How Affairs, Attractions, and Addictions Develop, and How to Guard Your Marriage Against Them, by Dave Carder

Eye-opening stories, clinical insights, and up-to-date data reveal what adulterers learned the hard way. Carder discusses

- How attractions can lead to affairs.
- Ways your mentee may be vulnerable to affairs.
- The common ingredients of adultery.
- How to restore intimacy to a marriage.
- How to make wise, protective decisions.

***Hope After Betrayal: When Sexual Addiction Invades Your Marriage*, by Meg Wilson**

Mentees can find reassuring counsel, compassionate insight, and wise direction after a spouse's sexual addiction. Includes a chapter by Meg's husband that sheds further light on the difficult road to healing from sexual addiction, and an appendix addresses the effect sexual addiction has on children in the home.

***Fight for Love: How to Take Your Marriage Back from Porn*, by Rosie Makinney**

Makinney explores the science behind porn addiction, how to help a spouse get and stay porn-free, and how to best protect kids and oneself from porn.

GRIEF

***A Grace Disguised: How the Soul Grows Through Loss*, by Jerry Sittser**

Written from the perspective of an author who lost his wife, mother, and daughter in a single auto accident, the excellent 25th anniversary edition also offers an additional chapter providing help for pastors and counselors.

***Getting to the Other Side of Grief: Overcoming the Loss of a Spouse*, by Susan J. Zonnebelt-Smeenge, R.N., Ed.D. & Robert C. De Vries, D.Min., Ph.D.**

Empathy, valuable psychological insights, biblical observations, and male and female perspectives help mentees experience their grief in the healthiest and most complete way so they can move forward to embrace the new life waiting on the other side.

***Grieving a Suicide*, by Albert Y. Hsu**

Amidst confusing emotions and questions, this book gently guides toward healing through the shock and trauma of suicide.

LGBTQ+

***Guiding Families of LGBTQ Loved Ones*, by Posture Shift Ministries**

This is one of our favorite resources that helps you understand the experiences of your LGBTQ loved one and offers practical steps to navigate challenging situations. FamilyLife and Guiding Families are fully aligned regarding the definition of marriage and the place of all sexual activity being reserved for marriage. Though there may not be full organizational alignment between Guiding Families and FamilyLife on some specific nuances regarding LGBTQ topics, we still wanted you to be aware of this insightful resource.

MARRIAGE

***Divorce and Remarriage: A Redemptive Theology*, by Dr. Rubel Shelly**

Divorce isn't something we'd wish on those we'd love. But is it sometimes necessary? Dr. Rubel Shelly writes that "in our sincere efforts to follow the *words* of God, we may have abandoned the heart of God for his people." This book offers a redemptive theology answering questions of divorce and remarriage.

***The Meaning of Marriage: Facing the Complexities of Commitment with the Wisdom of God*, by Timothy and Kathy Keller**

Pastor Tim Keller offers wisdom and insights on marriage—offering a wonderful foundation for marriage mentoring.

***Sacred Marriage: What If God Designed Marriage to Make Us Holy More Than to Make Us Happy?* by Gary Thomas**

Thomas helps mentees uncover ways that marriage can become a doorway to a closer walk with God and each other.

***Marriage: Its Foundation, Theology, and Mission in a Changing World*, by Curt Hammer, John Trent, Rebekah J. Byrd, Eric L. Johnson, & Erik Thoennes**

A variety of theologians discuss issues surrounding modern marriage from a biblical perspective.

PORNOGRAPHY

Women

***Beggar's Daughter: From the Rags of Pornography to the Riches of Grace*, by Jessica Harris**

Offers a candid glimpse into the heart, mind, and struggle of a female porn addict.

Men

***Finally Free: Fighting for Purity with the Power of Grace*, by Heath Lambert**

Is your mentee ready to move from a life of struggle to a life of sexual integrity? Help them toward true hope and freedom from pornography as they lean on Christ's strength.

Children

***Good Pictures, Bad Pictures: Porn-Proofing Today's Young Kids*, by Kristen A. Jenson**

The question is not *if* your kids will be exposed to pornography, but *when*. Equip parents to initiate preventative conversations about pornography, explaining to kids the science behind pornography's effect on the brain and empowering them to resist pornography's powerful draw.

***Wired for Intimacy: How Pornography Hijacks the Male Brain*, by William M. Struthers**

Many users of pornography struggle with its addictive power and the limited access to accountability, because porn can alter the way the brain functions, including how we form memories and make attachments. This book is targeted specifically at men, but offers hope and help for anyone addicted to porn.

PRODIGALS

***You are Not Alone*, by Dena Yohe**

Most parents would do anything for their child. And when that child becomes a prodigal, parents feel isolated and alone. This book helps the parents handle the situation in a way that honors God by finding ways to stay spiritually and emotionally healthy themselves.

SEXUALITY

***Celebration of Sex and Celebration of Sex after 50*, by Dr. Douglas E. Rosenau & Dr. Jim and Carolyn Childerston**

These scripturally based books answer a myriad of questions on sexuality in a direct, honest, and respectful way.

***The Good Girl's Guide to Great Sex: Creating a Marriage That's Both Holy and Hot*, by Sheila Wray Gregoire**

Empower mentees to bring greater satisfaction to their marriage in every way—emotionally, spiritually, and physically—whether preparing for their honeymoon or in the empty nest as they search for a new spark.

***Intimate Issues: Twenty-One Questions Christian Women Ask About Sex*, by Linda Dillow & Lorraine Pintus**

Through solid teaching, warm testimonials, scriptural insights, and experts' advice, mentees can find resolution for questions and fears around sex, surprising insights about God's perspective on sex, and a variety of practical and creative ideas for enhancing their marital physical relationship.

***Rethinking Sexuality: God's Design and Why It Matters*, by Dr. Juli Slattery**

As a mentor, the better equipped you are to address relevant issues around sexuality, the more you're equipped to help others in often deeply personal issues. This book describes how to find sexual wholeness amidst a world of sexual brokenness, addiction and confusion.

***God, Sex, and Your Marriage*, by Dr. Juli Slattery**

Dr. Juli Slattery challenges the common assumptions couples have about sexuality and presents the richer biblical narrative of sex as a metaphor of God's covenant love.

SEXUAL ABUSE

***Healing the Wounded Heart: The Heartache of Sexual Abuse and the Hope of Transformation*, by Dr. Dan B. Allender**

This book is key in understanding sexual abuse personally as well as for the sexually broken all around us: “With great compassion Allender offers hope for victims of rape, date rape, incest, molestation, sexting, sexual bullying, unwanted advances, pornography, and more, exposing the raw wounds that are left behind and clearing the path toward wholeness and healing. Never minimizing victims’ pain or offering pat spiritual answers that don’t truly address the problem, he instead calls evil evil and lights the way to renewed joy.”

***Sexual Sanity for Women: Healing from Sexual and Relational Brokenness*, by Harvest USA and Ellen Dykas, editor**

Twenty lessons guide mentees to understand God’s good design for sexuality, the underlying reasons they struggle with sexual brokenness, and how the grace and truth of Jesus can be applied to their struggles.

***Hush: Moving from Silence to Healing after Childhood Sexual Abuse*, by Nicole Braddock Bromley**

We’ve found this resource helpful when *Healing the Wounded Heart* is just a bit too much. This is a more entry level resource to sexual abuse.

Online Tools:

APlaceOfHope.com

In-house treatment for a variety of emotional and mental disorders (Depression, Anxiety, Eating disorders, PTSD, OCD, Addictions, etc.) We've used this for staff and it's been helpful.

Axis.org

This non-denominational organization brings help and hope to parents and mentors guiding teens through real-time culture, and into conversation around Jesus.

CelebrateRecovery.com

A Christ-centered, 12-step recovery program for anyone struggling with hurt, hang-ups, and habits of any kind—and a safe place to find community and freedom from the issues controlling a mentee's life.

RelationalCare.org

The Center for Relational Care (CRC) offers biblically based therapy and intensives.

DaveRamsey.com

Ramsey Solutions seeks to provide biblically based, commonsense education and empowerment on finances, to give hope to everyone in every walk of life.

CCEF.org

The Christian Counseling & Education Foundation's "Resources" page offers biblically based tools on mental and emotional health issues.

CenterforFaith.com

The Center for Faith, Sexuality, and Gender helps leaders cultivate a more robust biblical ethic of marriage, sexuality and gender. They also help Christians create a safe and compassionate environment for LGBT+ people, their families, and anyone wrestling with their sexuality or gender identity.

FamilyLife.com

Find help with family and marriage topics (see topics in the menu) and remarried couples and stepfamilies (see the FamilyLife Blended page).

GretchenRubin.com/quiz/the-four-tendencies-quiz/

We've found this (secular, non-scientific) assessment helpful to unpack mentees' ways of approaching life.

GuidingFamilies.com/direct-care

Provides a safe, caring place for LGBT+ people of all ages as well as parents and family members of LGBT+ loved ones. Acts as an extra, informal source for their support and encouragement.

FightTheNewDrug.org

Science, facts, and personal accounts help spread the message about the harmful effects of pornography.

5LoveLanguages.com/profile/

Mentees' relationships may benefit from this online assessment of Gary Chapman's 5 Love Languages®.

[ChristianCounselors.Network](#)

Focus on the Family provides this resource to help you locate a Christian counselor in your area, as well as topical help.

[HopeRestored.FocusOnTheFamily.com/](#)

Biblically based, Christian marriage counseling intensives help couples facing a crisis moment in their marriage or suffering from years of disconnection and relationship decay. Licensed Christian counselors are trained to work with couples with deep hurts and long-term problems.

[LeslieVernick.com/the-emotionally-destructive-marriage/assessment/](#)

This online assessment from therapist Leslie Vernick helps mentees evaluate for themselves whether they're in an emotionally destructive marriage.

[Prepare-Enrich.com](#)

This well-established marriage assessment tool also provides further developmental training of mentors.

[PROQOL.org](#)

The Professional Quality of Life Assessment (ProQOL) evaluates those in ministry who may be experiencing “compassion fatigue,” or feeling overly concerned or responsible.

